

The Meat and Bean Group Foods

Go Lean with Protein

The *MyPyramid* Meat & Beans Group includes meat, poultry, fish, dry beans and peas, eggs, nuts and seeds. The foods in this group provide important nutrients such as protein, B vitamins, iron and zinc needed to boost the immune system, build and repair muscle, fuel activity and help your brain function, as well as vitamin E and potassium for a healthy heart. Cut the fat and calories from these foods by: buying lean cuts of beef—look for the words “loin” or “round”, trimming excess fat; removing the skin from poultry; baking/grilling/or broiling instead of frying; draining off any fat that appears during the cooking process; making meals with beans or lentils instead of meat; and rarely eating bacon and sausage.



Salmon Cakes

(Yields 6 –1 cake servings)

- 1 can 15 oz. salmon
- 1 egg (beaten)
- 1/4-1/2 Cup saltine cracker crumbs or bread crumbs
- 2 Tablespoons finely chopped onion
- 1 teaspoon EACH ground dried thyme and basil
- Dash of pepper
- 2 Tablespoons canola oil

Drain the salmon and place in a medium-sized bowl. Mash with fork (do not remove the bones, mash them in—this adds lots of calcium. Starting with 1/4 cup of the crumbs, mix all of the ingredients, except the canola oil. If the mixture seems too wet to make patties add remaining crumbs. Form into 6 patties. Heat the oil in a large non-stick skillet. Fry the patties over medium heat, turning them only once, until golden on both sides (about 4 minutes per side).



How Much Do I Need Every Day?

Protein needs vary depending on age and activity level. Extra protein does not help your body. In fact, your body will store the extra energy in the form of body fat and your kidneys will have to work harder to get rid of the rest. Use this chart as a general guide.

Children	2-3 years old	2 ounce equivalents
	4-8 years old	3-4 ounce equivalents
Girls	9-13 years old	5 ounce equivalents
	14-18 years old	5 ounce equivalents
Boys	9-13 years old	5 ounce equivalents
	14-18 years old	6 ounce equivalents
Women	19-30 years old	5 1/2 ounce equivalents
	31-50 years old	5 ounce equivalents
	51+ years old	5 ounce equivalents
Men	19-30 years old	6 1/2 ounce equivalents
	31-50 years old	6 ounce equivalents
	51+ years old	5 1/2 ounce equivalents

What Is An Ounce Equivalent?

1 egg, 1/4 cup cooked dry beans, 1 tablespoon of peanut butter, or 1/2 ounce of nuts or seeds (about a handful) each counts as 1 ounce from the meat and bean group. One thick slice of lunch meat is one ounce of meat. A serving of meat, poultry or fish the size and thickness of a deck of cards is about 3 ounces.



Durham County Health Department
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Money Saving Tips for Meat and Beans



1. Start With A Plan

Check for the weekly advertised meat specials at your grocery store and clip coupons from newspapers and magazines. Plan at least a week's worth of entrées so you can profit from the specials. Make a shopping list based on the week's meals you have planned. Armed with your coupons, weekly specials announcement and shopping list you are ready to start saving.

2. Stock Up and Save

Stock up on sale meat items and value/family packs to fill your freezer. It is safe to freeze meat in the original packing but it is best to rewrap or over-wrap the meat in freezer-safe plastic bags. When purchasing the large meat value pack, be sure to portion the meats in quantities suitable for your household and freeze the packages individual. To prevent freezer burn, be sure to press out all the air in each container and make sure the packages are air tight. Label each package with the name of the contents and the date it is frozen. When buying pre-cut meats like beef stew cubes or kabobs you are paying for the food and labor. Use your own sharp knife to cut a chuck roast into stew meat.

3. Plan for Leftovers

Plan dinners so you will have leftovers to use for later meals. It can be as simple as buying double the quantity you would normally use to feed your household then plan to serve the same entrée another night. Store the entrée in the refrigerator for up to three to four days or freeze it for up to two to three months. Or make the leftovers innovative by incorporating them into another recipe—a “planned over.”

4. Shop For Value Cuts

Cuts of meat from the shoulder and leg are well-exercised muscles, are more lean and have a course grain. These cuts are generally considered a “value cut” because they cost less but deliver good flavor and a large amount of meat. These less tender cuts can be tenderized by several methods.

- Marinate in a liquid containing an acid such as vinegar, wine, lemon or lime juice. Use 1/2 cup of liquid marinade per 1 pound of meat. Always marinate meat in a covered container (food grade plastic bags are good) in the refrigerator. Do not reuse marinade on another cut of meat.
- Pound steaks with the flat side of a meat mallet. Pound from the center of the steak to the edges.
- Use low heat and moist-cooking method to soften the meat. Both the slow-cooker and braising cooking methods are perfect cooking techniques for value cuts.

Examples of these value cuts are: Chuck roast, Blade roast, Eye of the Round, Top rump roast, Bottom rump roast and Top sirloin.

5. Substitute Beans for Meat

Use canned black beans or red beans in place of meat in your pasta sauces or meat casseroles.

6. Use Dried Beans

Rehydrate and cook dried beans to use in your recipes rather than canned beans. Refrigerate left over soaked or cooked beans until you are ready to use them or up to 3 or 4 days.

